According to the information available, the number of sick units as at the end of March, 1998 is as follows:—

State	SSI sick	Non-SSI/sick/Weak
Assam	15774	44
Meghalaya	4076	2
Arunachal Pradesh	456	2
Nagaland	1386	2
Manipur	1919	2
Tripura	2011	6
Mizoram	615	—
Total	26237	58

The Government has taken a number of steps for revival of sick industrial units which, *inter-alia*, include guidelines of Reserve Bank of India to banks, amalgamation of sick units with healthy units, setting up of Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR) under the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provision) Act, National Renewal Fund, National Equity Fund etc.

Purchase of TOBACCO by Russia

1084. SHRI RAMACHANDRAIAH RUMANDLA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Russia has agreed to purchase Indian tobacco during the recent Indo-Russian trade talks held in Delhi in January, 2000;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) other decisions taken for diversifying and expanding bilateral trade in hi-tech items?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) to (c) During the 6th Session of Indo-Russian Working Group on Trade and Economic Cooperation (WGTEC) Govt. of India have requested the Russian side to allocate sufficient rupee funds to Russian cigarette factories on credit terms to enable them to purchase Indian tobacco. The Russian side agreed to consider the proposal expeditiously. It was also agreed that an Indian delegation would visit Russia shortly to pursue the matter and to explore

opportunities for greater cooperation between the tobacco industries of the two countries.

During this Session both sides agreed to take necessary steps for diversification of bilateral trade especially in high quality and hi-tech items. The relaxation of value addition norms by Govt. of India for goods exported under the rupee debt repayment regime has created a favourable environment for export of hi-tech items form India.

Export Promotion Councils

1085. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Export Promotion Councils, including their achievements during last one year, State-wise;

(b) what are the rules and regulations for appointment of Chairmen of Export Promotion Councils;

(c) the names of the present incumbents to the Chairmanship of different Councils and since when they are occupying the post; and

(d) whether it is a fact that the Chairman, "CHEMEXCIL" is occupying the post beyond the prescribed tenure; if so, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) There are 20 Export Promotion Councils (EPCs) out of which 11 under the administrative control of the Deptt. of Commerce and 9 are under the administrative control of the Ministry of Textiles. The names of Export Promotion Councils are given in the enclosed statement (See below). These Councils are registered as non-profit organisations under the Companies Act/ Societies Registration Act. The Councils function on a national level and therefore, Statewise data of their performance is not available.

(b) The appointment of Chairman of Export Promotion Councils is governed by the Memorandum & Articles of Association/Byelaws adopted by the respective Export Promotion Councils.

(c) The names of present Chairmen of different Councils alongwith the date of appointment as Chairman are indicated in the statement referred to in part (a) of the reply.